ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

When ink is sucked from the nozzles during a cleaning process, a rubber cap having a plural number of small spaces independently operable for ink suction is applied to a print head , and only the small space associated with a clogged nozzle of those nozzles of the print head is connected to a suction pump. A user looks up in advance the number and location of a clogged nozzle, judges the cause of the clogging of the nozzle on the basis of the number and location of the clogged nozzle, and selects a suitable type of cleaning process, a selective cleaning (based on the specified-nozzle suction) or a conventional cleaning (based on the all-nozzle suction). A valve unit is arranged in an ink supply path located between an ink cartridge and a recording head. The valve unit controls the opening and closing of the ink supply paths between the ink cartridge and the nozzle openings during the cleaning operation of the recording head. For example, air bubbles entered into the recording head when the ink cartridge is replaced, can be discharged by opening the valve unit. By closing

valve units disposed on the other recording head that does not receive a new ink cartridge, unnecessary ink suction discharging ink equally through all nozzle openings can be avoided. Therefore, an ink jet recording apparatus capable of reducing the running costs is provided.